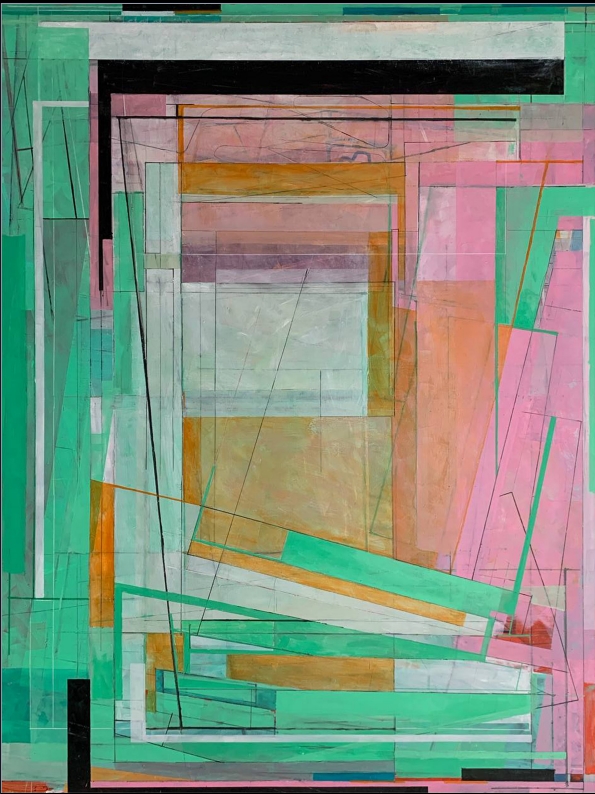


“WHAT AN ASTONISHING THING A BOOK IS.”
—Carl Sagan



THE ARCHITECT PAINTER PRESS



MAGIC SHOW

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“I
MAKE
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PAINTING.”

—Henri Matisse



JEFFREY HILDNER | PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

MAGIC SHOW

FIELD GAMES, BY RICHARD ROSA

I've waited almost 15 years for this moment. For almost 15 years, I've dreamed of the day when I would find myself doing what I'm doing right now: writing a publisher's foreword to announce the release of a book that gives me the opportunity to say 7 words—to reveal a single sentence that I've had to conceal, never getting a chance to publish, till now.

But first, let me warm to my theme . . . and flash back to the beginning . . . and tell you what I've learned . . .

FALSE VICTORY SUCKS. You think you won. You got that thing you dreamed about. Then suddenly—no.

They read out *La La Land* as the winner of Best Picture at The 89th Academy Awards. You go up to the stage. They hand you the Oscar. You give your acceptance speech. Then . . . oops. We meant *Moonlight*.

And they take your Oscar back.

Defeat hurts. But not anywhere near as much as False Victory. You don't just experience the agony of hopes dashed. You experience the agony of hopes dashed right at the moment when you thought your dream came true. You might naturally feel that the universe isn't on your side.

Don't just ask the producers of *La La Land* and its writer and director, Damien Chazelle. Ask Howard Ratner (Adam Sandler) in the 2019 movie *Uncut Gems*. Ask Mac Sledge (Robert Duvall) in the 1983 movie *Tender Mercies*. Ask the Super Bowl LI runners-up Atlanta Falcons. False Victory does a number on us, tanking our joy in a special, cruel way along the story arc of our lives.

But False Victory can also spark a new adventure!

Just ask the founder of The Architect Painter Press (TAPP). Because without my knockdown by a False Victory some 21 years ago? There would be no TAPP. And I wouldn't be in the position to showcase the beautiful paintings of my friend and artistic ally Richard Rosa.

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I launched TAPP on September 9, 2005 under the banner, “Live Brave.” During the past almost 15 years, I don't know how brave I've lived, but TAPP has published 8 books. They present my buildings, paintings, and insights—work that reflects my focus on the visible and invisible architecture of art and life.



Gray Tree, 1911. Piet Mondrian. Oil on canvas. 31.375 x 43 in. © Public Domain

It's been a wild ride to this point, full of ups and downs, twists and turns, frustration and elation—a Samuel Becket-streaked ride: “Try again. Fail again. Fail better.” Fail worse. But from the start, I’ve foreseen that TAPP could one day present the work of other artists, a book by someone other than myself. That was my hope. My dream. My goal.

I started this modest endeavor, which features a company staffed by a total number of employees of 1—me—to serve others: to inspire, as best I can, other people who aspire, as I do, to navigate the treacherous labyrinth of creative fulfillment, independent ideas, brave imaginations, individuality, and originality—in other words, the labyrinth of art.

TAPP started, as many good stories, do, with a man in trouble. Me. It was shortly after February 1999. I’d just experienced a scholarship high point on my architectural journey, only to be crushed by bewildering, heart-sinking disappointment at the finish line. My article “Remembering the Mathematics of the Ideal Villa” was peer reviewed and accepted for publication in the esteemed *Journal of Architectural Education*. I worked countless hours on that article, diligently researching published and unpublished texts about architect Le Corbusier’s 1927 Villa Garches, an iconic house on the outskirts of Paris. I acquired little-known drawings from the Fondation Le Corbusier in Paris. I crafted with care and precision the essay and its breakthrough illustrations, corrections to and expansions of Colin Rowe’s famous diagrams, published in his landmark 1947 essay “The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa,” the springboard for my essay. I readied every detail of my essay’s verbal and visual expression. I taped printouts of all 20 pages on my kitchen wall, swapping the pages out for fine-tuned updates over and over. I architected the article’s storyboard with the same relentless pursuit of polish and perfection I try to bring to every square inch of the buildings I’ve built.

All to no avail.



Well, not entirely. *JAE* via MIT Press did publish the article. They actually printed every word the way I wrote it (save for changing throughout the article the word *but* to *however*). They got the Verbal right. Thank you, *JAE*. But the Visual? My crucial diagrams? The “pictures worth a thousand words” illustrations that sum up my original discoveries and unlock the mathematical riddle of Le Corbusier’s “Ideal Villa”? On a scale of 0–10? I dunno, 3? *JAE* screwed them up big time. I’ll never forget how forsaken I felt when I finally dared to open the pages of the February 1999 issue of *JAE*, expecting to humbly revel in the pleasure of my work reaching fruition—and forever reaching an audience I’d hoped to benefit from my labor of love—only to feel heartbroken and angry.

Funnily enough, it was anger that saved me. St. Augustine said, “Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are anger and courage: anger at the way things are and courage to see that they do not remain the way they are.” I had the anger down. But I was also determined to live brave—and see that things would not remain the way they were. I couldn’t get a do-over with *JAE*. But I could, I foresaw, get a do-over another way: Publish the essay myself, in its correct and complete form, for all time.

And almost 7 long frustrating but empowering years later, on September 9, 2005, I did.

Since the publication of that first book, *GARCHES 1234 / Remembering the Mathematics of the Ideal Villa: An Essay on Le Corbusier’s 1927 Villa de Monzie/Stein*, which I have continued to refine ever since, I’ve also produced 7 other books, reaching an audience that so far ranges in the upper double digits. (Picture a LOL emoticon.) And I owe all my success, as it were, to the reversal of fortune of my triumph-turned-disaster *JAE* False Victory.

False Victory sparked my daunting but exhilarating quest to learn how to make books—write, design, create, produce, and publish books—and seize the same sword of total autonomy and control of my work that inspired me to paint, somehow bringing me home. Because as Henri Matisse said, “I make no distinction between the construction of a book and the construction of a painting.” False Victory helped me find what I needed (but didn’t know it) to advance the architecture of my deepest desire: an independent, self-directed creative life.

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I’ll never forget something my fourth grade teacher Ms. Robinson taught me. She asked me, “What is talent?” I said, “I don’t know. Tell me.” She said, “Talent is knowing when something isn’t right and working until it is.”

Her practical, left-field concept of talent stuck. It has sustained me for over 50 years. I kept working till my essay about Le Corbusier was printed right. And that’s how The Architect Painter Press was born.

RICHARD ROSA has talent. He knows when something isn’t right and works until it is—in his architecture drawings, models, and paintings. And Richard has that other thing too: courage. As Isaac (Woody Allen) says in *Manhattan*, implying a more conventional meaning of talent, “Talent is luck. The important thing in life is courage.” And put the two together—courage and talent, by whatever definition? When you see, feel, *know* that something isn’t right—a line, a comma, a color, a word, a sentence order, a paragraph break, a spatial figure, the deployment of the chess pieces of art in the composition of a verbal or visual expression, be it a wall, canvas, or book—and you work until you get it right? You just might create . . . magic.

Through the synchronicity and mutual-influence of his architectural mind and his exquisite paintings, Richard gives us magic. Talented and brave, true to his advanced and educated vision of architecture and painting, he has constructed a constellation of work indelibly beautiful—inspiring others, including his students and me, to keep striving to do the same. As I see it, he does so not only to realize the dream of his own creative self-fulfillment but to also, simultaneously, do so in the service of others—so that we all may better knuckle down and commit more fully to our own talents. Richard honors the universal, eternal call to follow our unique path, to stay true to our unique individual destiny, charting his course on the open sea, no matter how rough the wind and waves, with passion, prolific power, and a generous heart.

I look forward to publishing the work of other artists, especially other friends of mine in the arena of architecture, sculpture, and painting. But it makes sense that Richard would be the first. He stands closest to me on the wavelength of the Le Corbusier tradition—the Leonardo and Michelangelo tradition—of The Architect Painter. Who better to mark TAPP’s crossing of another threshold than to publish *Field Games*, Richard’s first book but surely not his last.

Thank you, Richard, for helping me more fully realize my dream: in some small way, to change the world—to alter the genetic code of an audience’s soul, whether by painting, building, essay, screenplay, or book—idea or look. Your work reverberates with the spirit of Khalil Gibran’s priceless insight, “Work is love made visible.”

And you give me the chance to say the 7 words I’ve waited to say for 15 years—all the while envisioning a future when the seedling of TAPP would one day become a beautiful Mondrian *Gray Tree*:

Today The Architect Painter Press branches out.

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The thing about False Victory? It’s only one side of the gold coin of success. The other side? False Defeat.

Just ask Super Bowl LI champs the New England Patriots. Or the cast and crew of *Moonlight*. But don't ask Howard Ratner (*Uncut Gems*) or Mac Sledge (*Tender Mercies*)—or the cast and crew of *La La Land* or the Atlanta Falcons, at least not yet—because not every False Victory turns out to be a False Defeat. But I'm lucky. Mine did.

I didn't learn the terms False Victory and False Defeat, which I choose to cap, until many years after my *JAE* epic fail. I owe my grasp of this archetypal concept of how life works to my development as a screenwriter and story architect during the past 19 years, starting with the course I took in 2001 at Columbia University. New vocabularies open up new realities. And I didn't know in 1999 that my False Victory would somehow become the new reality of False Defeat—the life-changing catalyst I needed to move forward. If *JAE* had not misprinted my illustrations, would I have dared scale the mountain of self-publishing and achieve, through skill set and output, the True Victory of total control of what you read and what you see? My know-how led to an unexpected career opportunity from 2002–2012: senior editor, senior writer, and creative director for the weekly *Christian Science Sentinel* and the monthly *The Christian Science Journal*, two international magazines that reach an audience far larger than *JAE*. My quest to correct the blunder of my *JAE* essay equipped me to serve others in ways I never dreamed, equipped me as well to create my own work on my terms and live true to the spirit of architect Howard Roark, who proclaims in Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*, wielding the anthem-sword of artists of all time, “My work done my way.” Or when it comes to collaboration—like Richard and me on this book? Our work done our way.

My False Victories/False Defeats have inched me along my adversity-riddled path toward the goal of Stephen Daedalus in James Joyce's novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*: “To discover the mode of life or of art whereby my spirit could express itself in unfettered freedom.” Freedom that rises from choosing not to be a False Victory victim but a False Defeat creator. Freedom that, in turn, I hope, will help others free the angel of their own unfettered creative freedom.

Because The Architect Painter Press wants to inspire others to Create Brave.

Live Brave.

By the way, the line by Carl Sagan that kicks off this publisher's foreword? That's only the first line of what Sagan says about the value of a book. And I owe Richard for bringing it to my attention. Thank you, Richard, for gifting me with Sagan's ode to a book, which puts into words how I feel—how you feel—and why I started TAPP:

“What an astonishing thing a book is. It's a flat object made from a tree with flexible parts on which are imprinted lots of funny dark squiggles. But one glance at it and you're inside the mind of another person, maybe somebody dead for thousands of years. Across the millennia, an author is speaking clearly and silently inside your head, directly to you.

Writing is perhaps the greatest of human inventions, binding together people who never knew each other, citizens of distant epochs. Books break the shackles of time. A book is proof that humans are capable of working magic.”

Welcome to Richard Rosa's magic show.

FIELD GAMES

JEF7REY HILDNER | JANUARY 1, 2020—SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA



Harlequin, 2020. Richard Rosa. Oil, graphite, China marker, and oil paste on canvas. 72 x 96 in. (Rotated)

